

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 RSR-01 H-03 SS-15 SSO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 USIE-00 DODE-00

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O 041217Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6250

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 13781

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH

SUBJECT: PRESS AND STUDENT REACTION TO SENATOR GOLDWATER'S REMARKS
ON BOMBING THAILAND

REF: FBIS BANGKOK D040922Z SEP 73

1. BOTH THE PRESS AND THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND (NSCT) HAVE TAKEN CONSIDERABLE UMBRAGE OVER THE PRESS REPORTS OF REMARKS SENATOR GOLDWATER ALLEGEDLY MADE IN DES MOINES AUGUST 31.

2. ACCORDING TO NEWS ACCOUNTS HERE, GOLDWATER SAID THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WOULD BE "PERFECTLY JUSTIFIED" IN LAUNCHING FULL SCALE BOMBING RAIDS IN THAILAND IF COMMUNIST FORCES TRIED TO OVERRUN THE KINGDOM. ACCORDING TO AN ARTICLE BASED ON A UPI REPORT FROM DES MOINES, GOLDWATER SAID THAT BOMBING WOULD BE NECESSARY TO PROTECT OIL TRANSPORT ROUTES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST TO INSURE FUTURE U.S. OIL SUPPLIES ARE NOT REDUCED OR TOTALLY CUT OFF: "IF WE'RE GOING TO HAVE OIL AND FUEL, WE HAVE TO KEEP THAILAND...IT IS TO OUR VITAL NATIONAL INTERESTS TO PROTECT THAILAND." REPORTEDLY HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE "ONLY PROMISING WAY OF GETTING GAS AND OIL BY OCEAN IS ACROSS THE KRA ISTHMUS...IF THAILAND IS ATTACKED I THINK THE PRESIDENT WOULD BE PERFECTLY JUSTIFIED IN RESUMING (SIC) BOMBING TO HELP THE THAIS." THIS LINK BETWEEN BOMBING THAILAND AND PROTECTING US OIL SUPPLY LINES MADE, IN THE LOCAL PRESS ACCOUNTS OF THE SENATOR'S SPEECH, HAS AROUSED THE STUDENTS' IRE AND PROMPTED A
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CONDEMNATORY EDITORIAL IN "THE NATION" OF SEPTEMBER 3 (REFERENCE).

3. THE NSCT HAS CIRCULATED AN INFLAMATORY CRITIQUE OF GOLDWATER'S REMARKS AND OF ALLEGED HIGHHANDED U.S. MILITARY BEHAVIOR IN GENERAL. IN ADDITION, THREE NSCT OFFICERS DELIVERED SEPTEMBER 4 A STRONGLY WORDED PROTEST TO THE EMBASSY AND DISCUSSED GOLDWATER'S ALLEGED REMARKS AND THE US PRESENCE IN THAILAND WITH POLITICAL OFFICERS AND THE PRESS ATTACHE.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE TRANSMIT BY IMMEDIATE CABLE ALL PERTINENT EXCERPTS OF GOLDWATER'S REMARKS. IN ADDITION PLEASE POUCH THE FULL TEXT AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME. WE WOULD ALSO RECOMMEND THAT SENATOR GOLDWATER BE MADE AWARE OF THE FUROR HIS REPORTED REMARKS HAVE CAUSED HERE IN THE EVENT HE MIGHT WISH TO MAKE A CLARIFICATION.

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